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362 trunk lines, which empty into open canals. Most urban centers have a system of high-level canals bringing in fresh water, and another network of low-level canals carrying away waste water. However, it is a common sight to see children swimming and women washing clothes or vegetables in low-level canals. Often garbage, night-soil, and other refuse are dumped into the fresh-water canals. Some municipal authorities are now considering elimination of open sewage systems with all their disadvantages, but the enormity of the job and financial difficulties preclude any immediate fulfillment of such plans. For instance, the municipality of Taipei is contemplating the construction of an underground drainage system costing hundreds of millions of Formosan dollars and requiring more than ten years to complete.¹²

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514 The scarcity of chemical fertilizers and the average farmer's lack of financial resources necessitates the use of all organic refuse materials from human and animal sources to enrich the soil. The consumption of raw vegetables fertilized by unprocessed night soil is a primary cause of the spread of intestinal diseases. In addition the use of night soil presents problems of collection and disposal. In cities, human excrement from one or more households is often stored in water-tight vaults. The contents are periodically emptied by

11. E. A. Turner, "Environmental Sanitary Conditions in Taiwan," Chinese American Economic Cooperation, Volume II, No. 2, Feb. 1953, pp. 51-65.

12. Central Daily News, Jan. 11, 1955.

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314 long-handled dippers into wooden buckets and carried to collectors' carts for transportation to reservoirs outside the city. There the night soil is sterilized before being distributed to rural areas. In the countryside, human excrement is usually taken directly from the privies and applied to the soil without processing.

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364 Refuse of all kinds is extensively utilized. Private or municipal collectors of refuse carefully sort waste material to salvage and resell as much of it as possible. Organic waste is used for composting fertilizer; paper, rags, glass, and metals are sold for scrap. While waiting for disposal, the compost piles and junk heaps provide breeding places for disease, rats, and insects. Other breeding places for diseases and their carriers are provided by waste accumulation in the streets and back yards of cities; the number of workers engaged in the collection and disposal of night soil and refuse is insufficient for prompt waste disposal. In Taipei, for instance, while the population was doubling in the 1950-54 period, the number of night-soil collectors¹³ increased only from 410 to 428. However, under the cooperative efforts of the American MSMC, the JCRR, and government agencies, more efficient and sanitary methods for the collection and disposal of waste materials are being adopted.

744 The problem of sanitation is complicated by public ignorance concerning it. Although the people

13. The Central Daily News, Jan. 21, 1955.